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Naked Ladies in the Garden?



For Immediate Release

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Naked Ladies in the Garden?

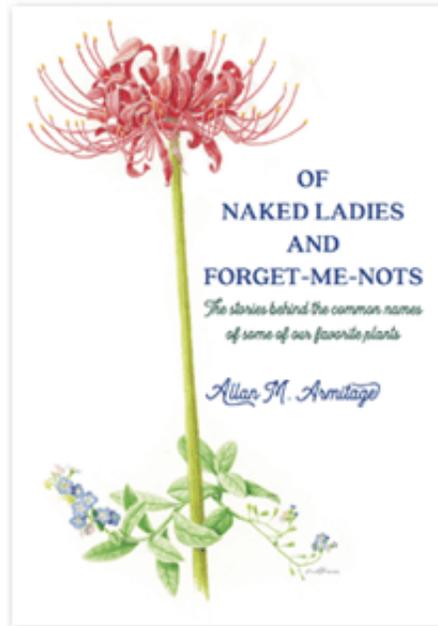
Dr. Allan Armitage pulls back the curtain on this and other common plant names in a new book for readers, gardeners, and history buffs.

March 2017—He’s a known introducer of new plant varieties, researcher, writer of the most-used perennials textbook in print, columnist, speaker, and tireless plant advocate, but where Dr. Allan Armitage truly excels is in storytelling.

With the publication of *Of Naked Ladies and Forget-Me-Nots*, now everyone has access to his sharp wit and bottomless curiosity. Readers will learn the backstory behind the plant names “hookers’ lips” and “hairy balls,” along with other favorites including, “bachelor’s buttons,” “boneset,” and “bouncing bet.”

He spins yarns about the mistaken myth of carrots improving eyesight and how a voodoo lily almost canceled a marriage. Bits and bobs of world history pepper the pages, including plants’ involvement in World Wars I and II, indigo’s role in colonial America, and Queen Anne’s legacy that lives on in a simple roadside wildflower. Helen of Troy, Achilles, and Queen Elizabeth all make appearances among the 95 stories included in the book.

A great gift for the gardener, etymology fan, trivia buff, historian, and reader! Chock-full of color photographs, historical drawings, and artwork.



Of Naked Ladies and Forget-Me-Nots: The stories behind the common names of some of our favorite plants


**Was There Really A Man
Called Joe Pye?**


Many botanical names carry a person's name (Jeffersonia, Achillea, Lewisia) but few common names bear people's names. Was there really someone called Joe Pye, and is a plant really named for him? There was and there is.

Joseph Pye was a Mohegan Indian and an herbalist who lived in the late 1700s near Stockbridge, Massachusetts. One of the herbs Joseph recommended was *Eupatorium purpureum*, plentiful in the area, for the treatment of typhoid fever.



Joe Pye weed behind mosaic and edge

One of the first mentions of Joe Pye's weed was provided by a Mohegan writer, Samson Oocom, who in July, 1787 "... went to Joseph Pye, alias Shauqueathquat, and had very agreeable conversation with him."

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The Toad Lily And Its Warts

Most gardeners know *Tricyrtis* as toad lily. That is fine, but wart flower may even be a more appropriate, and certainly more descriptive moniker. If you want people to remember this plant, remark on the beauty of toad lily, and then ask, "What did your Grandmother tell you about handling toads?"

I can almost guarantee you that they will chant - in unison, "Toads give you warts!" It is amazing how such tales endure. Once the shouting has diminished, slowly turn over a flower and show the three "warts" on the back. They will ooh and aah, and never forget the plant. Not only you but anyone who hears you tell the story of the wart flower will repeat it to unsuspecting friends.



Mark the "warts" on the back of the flower

Toad lily is the more common appellation given to *Tricyrtis*. There are a good number of stories running around out there. Some are as simple as the color of the flowers being somewhat similar to the color of toads.

Another somewhat more interesting story, has its origins in the early 1970s. It is based on a National Geographic article about the long-lost Tasaday tribe in the rain forests of the Philippines. It was an unprecedented discovery of a lost people, and subsequently widely reported.

Photos were taken and books were written about their rituals. One of these was to crush the leaves and rub the juice of *Tricyrtis* on their hands claiming that toads and frogs would be attracted to their scent and be easier to catch. Thus the name "toad lily."

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What Colleagues are Saying About the Book



“The minute I read the title of Allan’s new book, I was hooked. What gardener wouldn’t love well-told, fanciful stories that unveil the mystery behind some of the wackiest common names for plants? Allan’s delightful sense of humor, mixed with painstaking historical research and his own brilliant knowledge as a renowned plantsman, provides the foundation

for a delightful book that engages readers of all ages and gardening backgrounds. A must-read!”

—KERRY ANN MENDEZ, designer, lecturer, and author of
The Right Size Flower Garden

“A warm fire, cozy chair, cup of hot cocoa, and this book; doesn’t get much better than that. Unless it had the original title ‘Of Naked Ladies and Sleepy Dicks,’ which would require a glass of wine, hot toddy, or Moscow Mule. Never knew why these plants had such weird names, and now I can’t wait to tell their stories! Great, easy, fun read—my kind of book. What took you so long? Another winner, Dr. A! (It really wasn’t all about the hat was it?)”

—RON WILSON, host of “In the Garden with Ron Wilson”



To Buy

Order an autographed copy directly from the author at www.allanarmitage.net. For wholesale or review copies, [contact Dr. Armitage here](#).

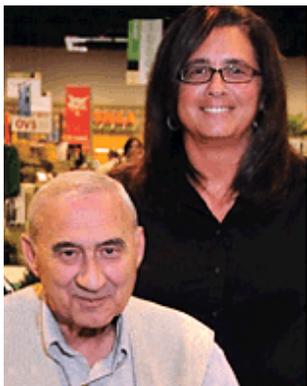
Press

Dr. Armitage is available for media appearances, lectures, and interviews. Please [contact him online](#) to inquire.

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Dr. Allan Armitage is well known as an award-winning writer, speaker, and researcher throughout the world. In addition to 15 books, he’s written hundreds of academic and industry papers, as well as a unique monthly column for “Greenhouse Grower” for over 30 years. No column has ever been repeated! He is an Emeritus Professor of Horticulture at the University of Georgia (retired 2014). His app for smartphones and tablets, “Armitage’s Greatest Perennials & Annuals,” serves as a bridge between industry and consumer and is popular for home gardeners and industry professionals alike. He holds academic degrees from McGill University, Canada, University of Guelph, Canada and Michigan State University, USA. Allan has introduced over 20 plants to the gardening community, including best-sellers Verbena ‘Homestead Purple’ and ‘Margarita’ ornamental sweet potato. He’s an invited lecturer in Canada, the United States, Portugal, Colombia, New Zealand, Australia, and Europe and is in constant demand. He has visited research and production centers throughout the world and studies annuals, perennials, cut flowers, and greenhouse crops in various climates. His tour company, Garden Vistas, has organized tours to the Great Gardens of the World every year for over 25 years. Learn more and keep in touch at www.allanarmitage.net.



UpShoot, LLC is a boutique horticulture marketing firm specializing in the sales, licensing and marketing of new plant introductions to North America, Canada, Europe and Australia. UpShoot also provides marketing services for gardening related products to both the trade and consumer audiences. For more information, contact Maria Zampini, President at 440-812-3249 or maria@upshoothort.com.

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